

CORAL REEF GRANTS WORKSHOP, AUGUST 2005
PARTNER FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE PROGRAM IN THE CARIBBEAN
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE (FWS)

Caribbean coordinator:

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Description:

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service's, Partner for Fish and Wildlife Program, is voluntary partnership program that helps private landowners restores wetlands and other important fish and wildlife habitats (Watershed) on their own lands.

Partner Program Principles:

- Voluntary
- Private and tribal lands
- Incentive-based
- Habitat Restoration
- Application of state-of-art techniques
- Leveraging resources through partnerships
- Collaboration of public and private resources
- Environmental, economic and social benefits
- Keeping common species common and restoring habitat for declining species
- Providing natural resource management teaching and learning opportunities

Who is eligible? The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service works with a wide variety of partners to restore wildlife habitat on private lands. These partners include other Federal agencies, Tribes, State and local governments, conservation organizations, academic institutions, businesses and industries, school groups, and private individuals.

What projects are eligible? Under the PFW Program any privately-owned land is potentially eligible for restoration. "Privately-owned," for the purposes of this Program, includes any land not owned by the State or Federal government. In addition, any land, whether it has been cropped, grazed, mined or cleared, can be restored.

Our Restoration Projects may include, but are not limited to:

- **Restoring wetland hydrology** by plugging drainage ditches, breaking tile drainage systems, installing water control structures, dike construction, and re-establishing old connections with waterways.
- **Planting native trees and shrubs** in formerly forested wetlands and other habitats.
- **Planting native grasslands** and other vegetation.

- **Installing fencing and off-stream livestock watering facilities** to allow for restoration of stream and riparian areas.
- **Removal of exotic plants and animals** which compete with native fish and wildlife and alter their natural habitats.
- **Prescribed burning** as a method of removing exotic species and to restore natural disturbance regimes necessary for some species survival.
- **Reconstruction of in-stream aquatic habitat** through bioengineering techniques.
- **Reestablishing fish passage for migratory fish** by removing barriers to movement.

What projects are not eligible?

Any project in public land (Federal and State lands) and projects that not benefits Federal Trust resources are not eligible for the PFW program.

How to determine eligibility:

The landowners need to contact the PFW Coordinator, a site visit will be programmed, and the PFW coordinator identifies any restoration, and enhancement needs for Federal trust resources within private land.

What is fundable, what is not fundable? Types of projects fundable are broad, but should address ecosystem or watersheds where efforts will achieve the greatest benefits for Federal Trust Resources and their habitats. Preference will be given to projects that benefit Federal Trust Resources. Projects should be self-sustaining (that is, with little or no dependence upon artificial structures or frequent maintenance).

Examples of fundable project types include, but are not restricted to: forested stream riparian buffers, migratory fish passage devices, natural stream restoration, wetland or coastal upland forest restoration, activities allow recovery of an area by restricting or controlling access or impacts (livestock fencing, low-impact mooring buoys for sensitive areas with high boat anchoring activity), invasive species control or removal, etc.

Grant Schedules or Cycles: The program is not a standard “grant” program. Agreement mechanisms include cooperative agreements, MOUs, MOAs, and Intra- or Inter-agency agreements. Availability of funding is announced in the Federal Register, and the announcement is available at: <http://partners.fws.gov>

Projects will be considered at any time, however, availability of funds is determined upon approval of the Federal budget. Agreement packages are usually sent to the Regional Office before June 1. We recommend early contact with the Program Coordinator.

Grants Management: While underway and after a project is completed, the Service verifies its satisfactory progress and completion with site visits. Any bills incurred by

the landowner are provided to the Service and reimbursements for project activities are provided based on the cost-sharing agreement. Reporting requirements and timetable are specified in the individual cooperative agreement.

The Service uses its Habitat Information Tracking System (HabITS) to report habitat improvement accomplishments and technical assistance associated with the Coastal Program. The Program Coordinator is responsible for monitoring the progress of projects. (See the FY 2005 Notice referenced above for additional information).

Recent projects: Recent projects have included: Restoration of tropical forest, Shade Coffee restoration for Neotropical migratory bird, Riparian buffer in Pellejas River, Adjuntas, wetland enhancement project for migratory birds in Manatí, Schoolyard habitat project, among others.

Project criteria and ranking: Priority ranking includes projects that benefit: National Wildlife Refuges, threatened, endangered, candidate, or declining species; Species at Risk; migratory birds of concern; and migratory fish species of concern. Secondary ranking factors include: Service ecosystem priorities; actions that reduce habitat fragmentation; conservation or restoration of imperiled habitats; whether the project is self-sustaining; and buffers for State and Federal conservation lands. Other considerations being equal, we give priority to funding projects with conservation agreements that are longer in duration, that involve greater non-Service partnerships and cost-sharing; and/or that have the greatest cost-effectiveness.

Supplemental Information: Contact the Program Coordinator early in the development of a project plan. A written proposal may not be required, but a formal agreement will have to be developed. Information to be included in the Agreement is: 1) Title Page, 2) Project Description that should include expected results in the form of habitat benefits from the project, 3) Project Statement of Work that specifies the participant's cost share if it is in-kind (work, equipment, materials) and a project timetable. 4) Project Budget to include the participant's and the Service's contribution, and 5) Supporting Documentation demonstrating the experience or expertise of the participant to conduct the proposed work and supporting the viability of the project.